[Anti-Arab and Anti-Muslim Bus Advertisements]

Resolution standing with Muslim and Arab communities in the face of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim bus advertisements.

WHEREAS, San Franciscans have come from around the world, and at its core, the City and County of San Francisco celebrates diversity, stands for acceptance, and has fought bigotry and racism; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco has many Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian (AMEMSA) residents; and

11

WHEREAS, Members of AMEMSA communities have been subjected to pervasive discrimination and hate crimes in the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, A group calling itself the American Freedom Defense Initiative (AFDI) has been submitting advertisements on buses across the country that specifically target members of the Muslim and Arab communities; and

WHEREAS, AFDI's newest advertisements, which denigrate Muslims and Arabs and which have no redeeming social value, have begun publication on San Francisco Muni buses on March 10, 2013; and

WHEREAS, AFDI was co-founded by Pamela Geller, who has been designated by the Southern Law Poverty Center as an anti-Muslim hate extremist; and

24

25

WHEREAS, AFDI submitted an offensive, bigoted bus advertisement to the New York Municipal Transportation Authority (NYMTA) that referred to Muslims and Arabs as savages (Savage Advertisement); the NYMTA rejected the Savage Advertisement, a decision reversed by a federal court who ordered that the Savage Advertisement be displayed based on the

First Amendment; the Savage Advertisement was also submitted to Washington D.C., where a court also directed Washington D.C. to run the Savage Advertisement pursuant to the First Amendment; and

WHEREAS, The Savage Advertisement was also submitted to the San Francisco Municipal Transit Authority (SFMTA) in August of 2012; the SFMTA put up the Savage Advertisement after the NY federal court decision; 75 organizations and 35 community leaders representing diverse communities and civil rights, labor and social justice organizations submitted a letter to the SFMTA requesting that it work with AMENSA communities to condemn the Savage Advertisement; the SFMTA Director and the Chair issued condemnations and issued a disclaimer next to the Savage Advertisement stating: "Muni condemns statements that describe any group as savages;" SFMTA donated the proceeds of the Savage Advertisement to the San Francisco Human Rights Commission (SFHRC) to use to address the harm from the Savage Advertisement; and

WHEREAS, In and around the time period that the Savage Advertisement ran on San Francisco buses, a mosque in Ontario, California found the limbs of a dismembered pig on the building's front steps during the holy month of Ramadan; a group of young people were arrested after throwing lemons at Muslims worshipping at a mosque in Hayward, California; a man in Morton Grove, Illinois, was arrested for firing a high- velocity air rifle at a mosque; a bottle filled with acid was hurled at an Islamic school during Ramadan prayers in Lombard, Illinois; an arsonist burned a mosque in Joplin, Missouri to the ground; six members of the Sikh community were killed when a white supremacist opened fire at their temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, In San Francisco, members of the Muslim and Arab communities were deeply harmed by the Savage Advertisement, as discussed in a community forum on January 31, 2013, with city leadership in attendance; at the forum, community members showed how

the advertisement is part of a pervasive environment of bullying and discrimination directed at the Muslim and Arab communities; Arab and Muslim Muni drivers spoke about the tremendous insult that came from having to drive buses disparaging them as "savages;" Arab and Muslim youth spoke about being bullied at school and about the ways having to ride buses to school calling them "savages" was very harmful to their development as individuals; and members from other communities, including the African-American, Asian-American, Latino, LGBT and Jewish communities, spoke in solidarity with AMEMSA communities in condemnation of the Savage Advertisement; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Muslim and Arab communities have asked that proceeds from the Savage Advertisement be used to address the systemic Islamophobic and racist issues facing the communities by funding a discrimination impact study that would research and develop a report concerning the impact of post-9/11 discrimination on members of the Muslim and Arab communities; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors stands with its AMEMSA communities in the condemnation of the Islamophobic and racist advertisements as well as the use of any language that marginalizes communities because of race, religion or ethnicity or that has the effect of legitimizing violence against them, and also states that while advertisements may have First Amendment protections, they have no value in facilitating constructive dialogue and are contrary to the values of diversity and inclusion that San Francisco prides itself on; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors ask SFMTA and SFHRC to direct that the proceeds of the Islamophobic and racist advertisements be used to fund a discrimination impact study of the impact of discrimination and hate on the Arab and Muslim communities post-9/11; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors encourages fellow community leaders and residents to speak out against these advertisements and stand in solidarity with members of the Muslim and Arab communities against the hate being directed at them.



City and County of San Francisco Tails

City Hall 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Resolution

File Number:

130257

Date Passed: March 19, 2013

Resolution standing with Muslim and Arab communities in the face of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim bus advertisements.

March 19, 2013 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 9 - Avalos, Breed, Campos, Chiu, Cohen, Kim, Mar, Tang and Wiener

Excused: 2 - Farrell and Yee

File No. 130257

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 3/19/2013 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo Clerk of the Board

Unsigned

3/28/13

Mayor

Date Approved

Date: March 28, 2013

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

> Angela Calvillo Clerk of the Board

File No. 130257